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HOMERIC PALACE

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THE
HOMERIC PALACE

BY

NORMAN MORRISON ISHAM, A. M.

ARCHITECT.

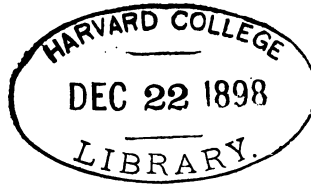
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PREFACE.

This book is an attempt to gather together the main facts about the palace of the Homeric time, and to explain them by illustrations.

The facts have been collected from various sources, which are indicated in the bibliography and the foot notes, so that those who wish to make a minute investigation can supplement the general survey here given.

The plates, many of them, have been redrawn from sources which are given upon them. I take this opportunity of thanking Professor Manatt for permission to use some of his illustrations. The drawings are grouped in such a way as to facilitate and invite comparison, not only between the different examples of the Mycenæan time, but between those examples and the forms in use in other periods, later Greek, Roman, and even Mediæval. This will be found a fascinating, as well as a valuable study.

The time-honored and much copied plan of Tiryns, by Dr. Dörpfeld, appears in a new light. I have put it into perspective, as it would appear if seen from a great height, and have left one half as a plan, and shown the other as a section and an elevation combined. I have made a similar use of one of the great gates at Arne.

While the standpoint from which the book is written is that of an architect, it is also the standpoint of a lover of Homer, and I hope that the work will be of use to all students of the great poems, as well as to those who like to follow the progress of domestic architecture and the history of fortification.

NORMAN M. ISHAM.

Providence, R. I., Oct. 13, 1898.

THE HOMERIC PALACE.

INTRODUCTION.

The Homeric king was a man of flocks and herds, of the many-clodded field, and of the swift black ship. These aspects of his life denote at once the sources of his wealth and of his danger. As he lived in a state of society quite well organized, that wealth was never entirely patriarchal. The number of his acres and the herds that fed on them may indeed have formed the basis of his riches, but his black ship brought him booty as well as the products of other lands; and the trading people, half merchants, half kidnappers and pirates, gave him in exchange, perhaps for cattle, wool or slaves, the works of cunning men, of Hittites, Phenicians and Egyptians.

But whatever may have been the original source of it, the splendor which that wealth enabled the greater chiefs to display, was as Homer records it, something marvelous, so marvelous that only the discoveries of the last twenty years have relieved the poet from the suspicion which Thucydides once cast upon him, that he embellished matters by his poetic art.

This wealth not only attracted from without such itinerants as were willing to sell what themselves or others had made, but it fostered schools of artists and craftsmen at home, so that the riches of the Homeric princes were not of crude gold or silver but of all articles of luxury, rich stuffs, amber and metals wrought in ways which, as the poet describes them, men till lately did not believe possible.

With this treasure, then, greater or less, according to his station, whether he were wide-ruling Agamemnon or the much-enduring lord of rocky Ithaca, the king

stood in no little danger. He needed some protection from those neighbors who, as fond of fighting as he was himself, had none of his nice notions as to the rights of others, or, at least, had none that were nicer than his.

We find, therefore, that during the Mycenæan period, the life of which no one seriously doubts that the Homeric poems reflect, though they are at a greater or less distance from it, each chieftain or each king has his own particular stronghold. He seats himself on some prominent crag and gathers around him his immediate family and dependents. In the valley below, and on the slopes of the hill, dwell the different clans of the great sept which the king rules. Each clan cultivates the land which is held in common. In a sudden attack they take refuge within their lord's citadel, or hill fortress. In time they grow too numerous for the ramparts to contain, and then they wall in a space at the foot of the hill and make this their defence.

This last enclosure can hardly be called a city. The epithet "wide-wayed" applied to Mycenae means nothing in our sense of the words. Tsountas and Manatt apply it simply to the wide streets between the villages of the different clans. The lesser chiefs, or those who lived in either the quieter or the more inaccessible districts, may have had no gatherings around the bases of their eyries, but Agamemnon and Priam looked forth on such a wide-wayed city at their feet.

Let us attempt to gain a clear idea of these strongholds—palaces we call them, though castle would be a better term—to reconstruct for ourselves, from such sources as are open to us, a typical royal dwelling of the Homeric time, its situation, approaches and defences, its internal arrangements, construction and decoration, and, finally, its external appearance.

There are two ways of doing this. One is to study the remains of the palaces or strongholds which have come down to

us, at Troy, Mycenæ, Tiryns, and at Gha or Arne in Lake Copais. The other is to compile the typical palace from the descriptions handed down to us in the Homeric poems. It is clear that neither of these methods will be satisfactory if used alone. We must combine the two. It will not be enough laboriously to work out a plan from the poems and then to compare it with the existing remains. We must check our work at each step in the planning, and this is really the important test. The final assemblage of the parts is, except in a general way, never the same in any two cases, and it would be as foolish to think that the plan was wrong because, after we had accounted for every room or court which Homer mentions, it did not exactly resemble that of the Tirynthian palace, as it would be to condemn a restoration of the Château Gaillard which did not present the same plan as the Tower of London.

We will begin, then, with the site of the

stronghold. We will terrace its summit, and plan its approaches. So far we will be following the ruins. We will then, following the works of Dörpfeld, Joseph, of Tsountas and Manatt, and of Noack¹ cull from the poems the character, and as far as possible, the environment of each part of the palace proper. As we go through this process we will compare each added part with the corresponding part of the palace or palaces which now exist. At the end of our work we shall have a typical plan which, while it will not be exactly like that of any ruin now known, will yet show a strong family resemblance to them all.

I.—THE LOCATION.

On the rugged soil of Greece, whether of Hellas proper, of the Asiatic coast or of the western islands, little search was necessary to find a strong position. The Anax,

¹ See bibliography.

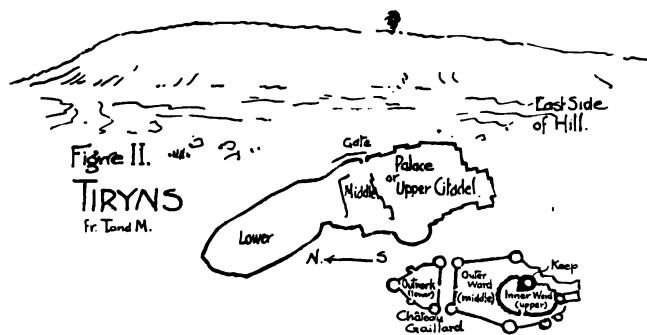
or lord, seized upon a hill of moderate height, generally no such crag as the Rhine castles are perched upon, but a single eminence either rising like an island out of the plain or swelling up from the rolling country around it to a height which varied from 200 to 800 feet. The Acrocorinthus, and the Acropolis at Athens are conspicuous instances. Others selected spurs of mountains or higher hills as at Mycenæ, where the flanks of the position are further strengthened by stream-traversed ravines. In still other cases we find the Homeric stronghold on a post like that of Troy itself, an outlying spur of a range of hills, connected with the low ridges to the immediate north-east of it by a narrow isthmus of land, while the Scamander washes the foot of the hill—such a position, with lower hills and a smaller stream, as that of the Château Gaillard which Richard the Lion Hearted built on the chalky cliffs frowning upon the Seine above Les Andelys. In some

instances, as in the fortress of Tiryns, figure II, the chieftain chose a rather low hill, higher at one end than at the other, and protected by the morass which surrounded it.

The site of Arne, figure IV, on an island in the recently drained Lake Copais, would at first lead us to consider it as belonging to the class of Tiryns, as, in fact, in one sense, it did. It seems however to have been a city with a palace in one corner, and to have been or to have grown out of a fort to protect the huge Mycenæan drainage works which existed in the marshy lake.¹

Let us assume for this study a hill of the second or Mycenæ class, about 250 feet high; a hill the sides of which are smooth and green for two-thirds of its height. Above this point the verdure gives way to the grey limestone which forms the

¹Tsountas and Manatt. *The Mycenæan Age*, Appendix B, where a plan of the palace is given, Noack in *Mittheilungen*, Vol. 19, p 403 et seq.



brow and the roughly level summit of the eminence, a summit broken by rising ground toward its northern end. Let us place the long axis of the hill north and south (figure X), assuming a steep descent on the north to a stream which, coming from the high mountains beyond, tumbles out of a ravine on the west, and receives the brook on the eastern side of our stronghold. The top of our hill slopes downward and southward, narrowing as it falls, until a slight depression marks the distinction between it and the yoke which binds it to the ridge of which it is the northern spur.

The walls, courts and buildings we have to place upon this summit we may divide into three classes: I. The Palace itself. II. The Dependencies such as stables, storehouses and the like, and, III. the Approaches and Defences. We will begin in the order in which the castle would naturally be built, that is, with the defences.

II.—THE DEFENCES.

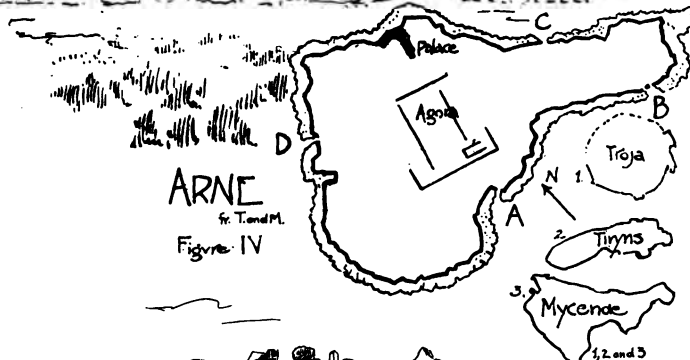
These consisted primarily, in all cases, of a strong outer wall around the whole extent of the citadel, with the more or less fortified gates and approaches. The wall, the *herkion* (ἑρκίον), of the poems, followed very closely the outline of the eminence on which the castle was built. Within the space surrounded by it there was—in the palace of Odysseus—a second line of enclosure, the wall of the inner court, of the “court” par excellence. This was the *herkion aules*, (ἑρκίον αὐλῆς). This outer wall might or might not coincide with the inner line at certain points, but between the two walls at the outer entrance, and thus near the entrance to the inner court also, was a wide space, an outer court,¹ like the outer bailey of a Norman castle.

The material of the wall is not clearly stated in Homer, except in the case of

¹ Joseph, *Paläste*, pp. 8-10.



fr M.D.A.I



ARNE

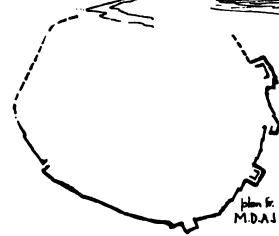
fr. T. and M.

Figure IV

1, 2 and 3
Comparative
plans of same
Scale as ARNE



from J. Duran



plan fr.
M.D.A.I

TROIA

Figure III.

The Mycenaean City.

Eumaios' abode, which was surrounded by a low wall of rough stones on each side of which was a row of palisades, while along the top ran a hedge of thorn¹. The smaller castles had walls very likely of Cyclopean character, while those humbler dwellings of the people, which were also fortified, were like that of the faithful swineherd. Many a wall, even among the more pretentious, was no doubt built of palisades. When we turn to the Mycenæan remains, figures I to IV, we find some variety both in the materials and in the mode of construction. In the earliest times of the Mycenæan epoch the outer wall up to the level of the hill-top was built of rough stones against the face of the cliff like a retaining wall, with considerable batter, or inward inclination, of its outer face.

Above this level the ramparts proper were of sun-dried brick. In the rampart of the second stratum of the fortress at Troy,

¹ Homer, *Odyssey*, XIV, 5-15.

1 in figure V, now known as the prehistoric or Burnt city, which Schliemann at first took for Homer's Troy, we have this construction. In the real Troy, however, the sixth stratum, 2 in figure V, we find walls which, while they still batter and still show the same retaining wall foundation, are much less sloping than those of the prehistoric strongholds. They are built too, of much better stone, and in a much better manner, and the upper rampart is here of stone also. Indeed the masonry in the Trojan wall is the best of the Mycenæan epoch. This is due in a large measure to the character of the stone, the easily worked *poros*, which allowed the fine faces and level beds of the Trojan wall; while the harder limestone of which Tiryns and Mycenæ were built gave to them only a rough regularity, the result, that is, of an attempt to build with level courses, an attempt always frustrated by the irregular fracture of the stones the workmen were quarrying. A very interesting peculiarity of these walls, as we find

them in the ruins at Troy, Tiryns, and especially at Arne, is the zigzag appearance, almost, of the plan. It is as if the walls, as is shown in 4 and 7 of figure V, were built in blocks which did not exactly align, but missed doing so by only a few inches. This fashion of wall building it is very difficult to explain. Noack¹ refers to some later Greek walls at Abai and Samikon, 5 and 6 of figure V, where it is exaggerated into a flanking system, but as it occurs in a palace wall inside the ramparts in the Homeric Troy,² VI F in 7 of figure V, he agrees with Dörpfeld³ in thinking it an artistic device, a means of breaking up the monotony of the wall surface; though it may, he thinks, have originated in some older way of flanking the curtain wall.⁴ At Hagia Marina, near Arne, Herr Noack gives a plan of sections of the wall which

¹ Noack, *Mittheilungen*, Vol. 19, p. 428-9.

² *Ibid.* 480.

³ *Ibid.* 430, 384.

⁴ *Ibid.* 427.

are convex curves on the outside and are battered. The straight walls seem to have no batter.¹

Though the great wall at Arne, which is indeed the wall of a city and not of a mere citadel, shows this system so strongly, we find that the real *herkion* of the palace recently discovered there, the wall surrounding the royal dwelling, and what Herr Noack calls the *Agora*, is entirely without it. This is a straight wall, enclosing an almost rectangular space.

The masonry of the great fortress walls of the crowning period of the style was excellent. There are two great classes into which the work may be divided. The first is that in which the stones are laid in level courses, with good faces, as at Troy, and in some parts of the walls of Mycenæ. The second is the Cyclopean work, so-called, that is, work in which, as at Tiryns, the courses are as nearly level as the rough,

¹ Ibid, 446-8.

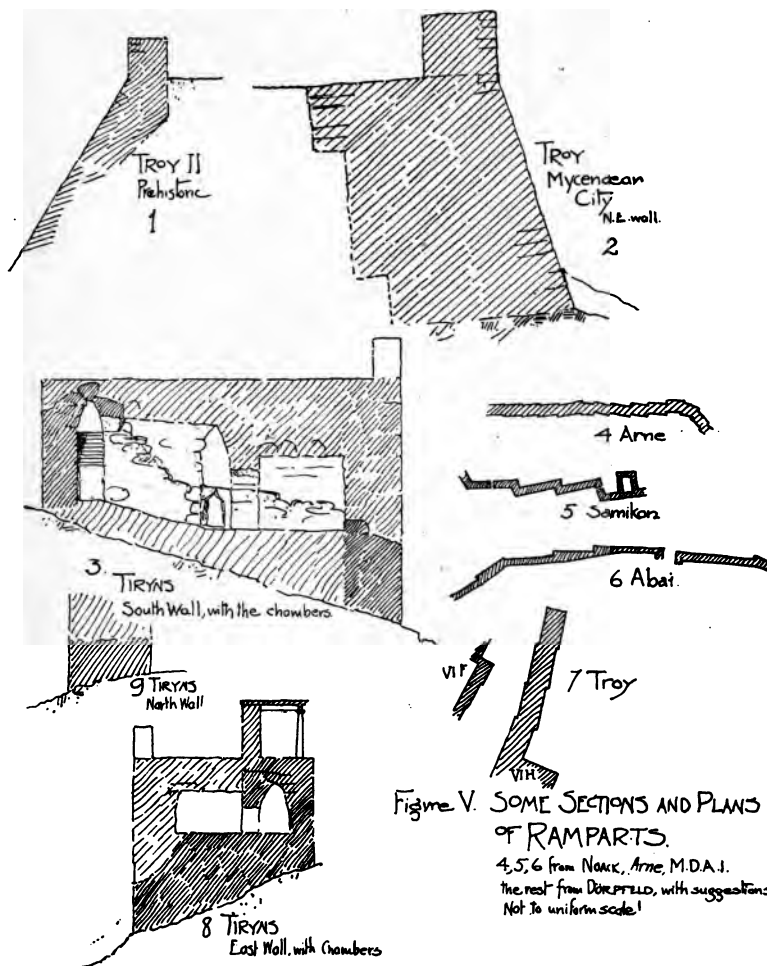


Figure V. SOME SECTIONS AND PLANS OF RAMPARTS.
 4, 5, 6 from NAKK, Arne, M.D.A.I.
 the rest from DORSETFIELD, with suggestions
 Not to uniform scale!

quarry-faced blocks of the material used will permit. Polygonal masonry is not Mycenæan. It is always a sign of later Greek work.

Although the architects of that old time knew the use of lime, and even of concrete, these mighty walls seem always to have been laid in mortar consisting of clay alone, or of clay with chopped straw.¹ The only use of the mortar in these cases was to give a better bed for the somewhat rough stone. It had no cohesive duty, and as the joints in the masonry grew better it was gradually abandoned, until, when the technique reached the perfection we see in the Parthenon, no mortar was thought of.

We have now built our wall of exterior defense, around the hill on which our palace is to stand. We have next to consider the approaches.

¹ Sometimes at Troy there is no mortar. Dörpfeld, *Mittheilungen*, 19, p. 392.

III.—THE OUTER GATE.

This generally stood at the most easily accessible point of the whole hill, in our case at the southern end, figure X, at the east of the extreme point. Homer gives us little information as to the outer gate, which can be read independently of the ruins, except that in the city of Priam there was a tower at the Scæan gate, and that the doors at the gate in the castle of Odysseus were double. According to the excavations, there were, apparently, several ways of arranging the outer gate so as to protect this important part of the defences. Almost all of these are given in figure VI, and a little attentive study of these drawings will show the reader that there is really only one form for all these gateways. That form, stated in the simplest manner, is a rectangle, at the outer end of which is a wide open portal, and at the inner a gate closed by heavy wooden doors. The space between, often quite large, was

generally, if not always, open to the sky, and, hence, since it was unprotected from the stones, arrows, or javelins of the defenders on the side walls of the rectangle already spoken of, it formed a skillful trap into which the enemy must walk in order to assail the wooden door of the inner or actual gate.

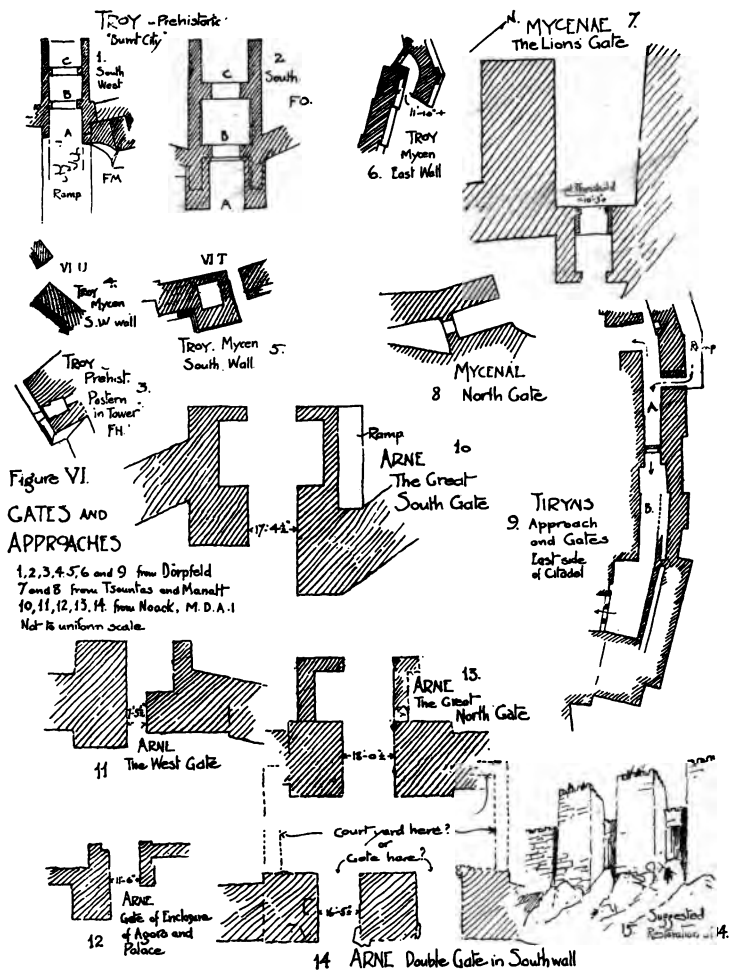
At the prehistoric citadel of Troy, the trap seems to be a double one. The portal at A, 1 and 2 in figure VI, was no doubt open; those at B and C very likely had wooden doors. The masses of wall outside were probably enlargements of the side walls of the "trap." At Arne we find them enlarged into huge flanking towers, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 in figure VI. The same is true of one gate at Mycenæan Troy, 5 in figure VI. At Tiryns, 9 in figure VI, the entrance to the "trap" is at right angles to the length of the passage.

At Troy, Arne, and Mycenæ is seen a very skillful disposition, which probably was the general one where the shape of the

hill allowed its adoption. It consists in setting back one surface of the curtain wall, and building the gate in the re-entrant angle thus formed. A glance at the Lions' gate, the great gate at Arne, and the others, 6, 7, and 10 in figure VI, will make this clear.

This double gate, with a space between, was used in Etruria in some instances, and survived into the Middle Age. There the town or castle gate had a flanking tower on each side of it on the outside of the wall, 1 in figure VIII, and what amounted to a pair of towers on the inside of the wall. The "trap" between was covered, but the upper floor had holes in it so that lead, hot water, darts, and other pleasant-ries of Mediæval warfare could be conveniently dropped upon the besiegers. The trap also occurs at Messene, in Greek work, and at Pompeii, in Roman, 2 and 3 in figure VIII.

The shape of the great shields which the Homeric heroes carried, a sort of



leather semi-cylinder held in front, reaching from head to heel, and from side to side, explains the lack of precaution for making the enemy turn his unshielded side to the flanking towers, as the complete panoply of the Middle Age explains such a lack at that period. A restoration of the great south gate at Arne is given in figure IX.

IV.—THE OUTER COURT.

One of the simpler or one of the more elaborate of the entrances in figure VI, whichever it is that allows us to pass through the outer wall of our castle—and we have chosen a gate of perhaps more than average size, brings us out upon the lower end of the hill, 2 in figure X, which the wall encloses. We would naturally expect the dwellings to occupy the higher ground toward the northern end of the summit. We might expect, also, another line of defense between the lower ground on which we now stand and the vital

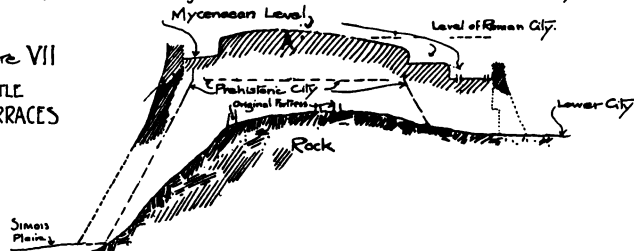
point of the whole fortification. Accordingly we will level off the higher ground at the north and proceed, by surrounding it with a wall, to separate it from what now becomes the outer court, the enclosure which Homer sometimes calls the herkos' (*ἔρκος*) the Basse-cour of the French château, the Outer Bailey of the English castle. Of this terracing Homer gives no hint unless perhaps a passage in the *Odyssey*,² "buildings are joined to buildings" or "follow buildings," (literally, out of other things there are other things), may point toward that effect of one building rising behind another which terracing would produce. But the excavations have revealed quite elaborate terraces of this kind. At Troy there was a complete second enceinte, A in 2 of figure VII, enclosing a higher court where were placed the dwellings which formed the palace proper. At Tiryns, figure II,

¹ Joseph. pp. 8-12. ² Hom. *Od.* XVII, 264-68.



1. MYCENAE. Section looking North reversed "von Schliemann's 'Mycenae and Tiryns'"

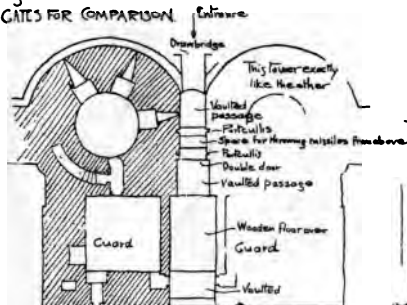
Figure VII
CASTLE
TERRACES



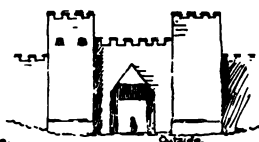
2 TROY Section showing Terraces, and relation of "Burnt" to Mycenaean City.
"von Dörpfeld 'Troja', 1895."

Figure VIII.

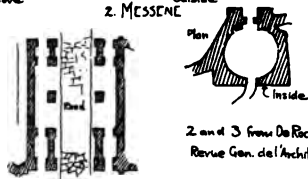
GATES FOR COMPARISON



1. Porte de Laon, COUCY, from Vallat-le-duc.



2. MESSENE



2 and 3 from De Roches,
Revue Gen. de l'Archit. v. 37.

3. POMPEII.

there were three stages, the lower court on the north, occupied no doubt by the houses of the lower retainers, the middle citadel, and the palace itself, on the upper citadel or highest part of the acropolis. At Mycenæ, figures I and VII, the palace stands on the highest point of the citadel and is approached by a ramp from the lower part of the hill-top where were, as in Tiryns, the houses of the inferior members of the royal court.

In all these cases we see that there is the outer courtyard, the space, that is to say, between the great outside wall and the inner wall which surrounded the smaller court lying immediately in front of the great hall of the palace. Homer does not describe this outer court very closely. Indeed, except at Tiryns and perhaps at Arne, where what Noack called the agora may have been the outer bailey of the castle, there was little to describe except an irregular space which contained stables, storehouses and other buildings.

But the poet does describe certain scenes and actions as taking place in the outer court. Here, too, he places the dung-hill whereon the ancient Argus breathed his last, and here, too, was the tholos, no doubt the latrine, about which there has arisen a goodly controversy.

A study of the plans of the various actual palaces of the time, and a little attention to figure XI, which is a restoration of the palace with the outer court and its approaches at Tiryns, will do more than many words to make clear to the reader the scheme of this outer court. It will be very instructive also to compare with Tiryns the plan of the Château Gaillard given in figure II, where the corresponding parts bear the same lettering. This will show how international the court scheme was and how persistently it had been handed down. At any rate the fortified dwelling of the Middle Age seems to have its roots far back in the Aryan past.

Let us now, on the top of our imaginary



Figure IX.
THE GREAT SOUTH GATE
AT ARNE

or typical hill, figure X, assume such a fore-court, and a second line of defence around the higher part of the hill where we intend to set the palace.

V.—THE INNER GATEWAY.

*The Prothuron, Πρόθυρον, the Propylæum
of the Second Court.*

For some covered gateway leading into the aule (αὐλή) or inner court, we have full Homeric authority, though, unfortunately it is difficult to arrive, from the mere data of the poems, at an absolute restoration. The prothuron exists because the characters traverse it in their “exits and their entrances;” that it is covered, and probably has columns to support its roof, we judge from the way in which in the palace of Menelaus, the word ἐρίδουπος—the resounding or echoing is combined with it.¹ We infer also that it was of considerable

¹ *Od.* XV. 146 quoted by Joseph, p. 13.

size, for the servant of Menelaus, when he had led the horses of Telemachus to their stalls, no doubt in the outer court, leaned the chariot against the shining walls under the protection of its portico. Homer speaks also of its doors, and of the bar which secured them, and of the threshold of the court, οὐδὸς αὐλῆος, whereon they must have swung.¹

All these somewhat vague conditions are met and the whole subject made clear by the discoveries at Troy and at Tiryns—we might also add by the Propylæa of the Athenian Acropolis. For the form of the Greek gateway underwent no essential changes from the time of prehistoric Troy, the time which we may call the early period of Mycenæan architecture, to that of historic Athens; from 2500 B. C., that is, to Mnesicles B. C. 430. Two parallel walls intersect the main wall at right angles, one at each side of the door.

¹ Joseph, pp. 12-15 ; 34-7.

They project beyond the outside of the wall to some considerable distance, and form a porch without columns, or a portico in antis with two columns; the same arrangement in either case they repeat on the inside. The first of these plans is found in prehistoric Troy, 1 and 2 in figure VI, in the outer wall; the second in the entrance to both outer and inner court at Tiryns, figure XI. A comparison of these plans with that of the famous entrance to the Athenian Acropolis, will show how steadfast the essential idea of the Greek monumental gateway has remained, and how old it is.

This comparison also brings us for the first time face to face with a question which we shall meet again—did the older gateways have a flat roof, or did they have the pitched roof of the great Periclean example? In the restorations in figures X and XI, we have used the pitched roof. Through such a gateway, then, we have to pass from the outer court to the grand

court, the inner bailey, the Cour d' honneur of the castle. We have several feet to ascend, by means of an inclined plane, in gaining the higher ground of this second enclosure. At Mycenæ there is a fine flight of steps leading from a little vestibule, or guardroom, up to the inner court, and the drawings show traces of a propylæum.¹ At Arne all traces of a courtyard in front of the L shaped palace seem to have disappeared. No doubt some of the rooms in the palace are really inner courts.²

VI.—THE INNER COURT.

Αὐλή.

Nothing about Homer's description of the castle of the hero is more certain than the aule. Odysseus, looking with Eumaios at his ancestral dwelling, says: "These indeed, Eumaios, are the beautiful halls of

¹ Tsountas and Manatt, plate IX.

² Ibid, p. 376.

Odysseus. Easily are they to be recognized and known among many. Building rises beyond building (or is added to building) with wall and with cornice, and double are the doors. No man could easily storm it."¹

Probably the aule was a part of every house in the Homeric time. The abode of Eumaios possessed one, which he had built "for the swine of his absent lord," on high ground, lofty, great, and apart from other buildings.² He seems to have had no outer court. That there sometimes was grass in the court we know from the sacrifice which Peleus offered standing on the grass of his courtyard.³ That there was also an artificial floor we know from the expression "well-wrought," which the poet applied to the pavement of the courtyard in the house of Odysseus. It was of concrete, a mixture of lime and pebbles, which must have con-

¹ *Od.* XVII, 264 ff., quoted by Joseph, p. 5.

² *Od.* XIV, 5-15.

³ *Il.* XI, 772-7.

tained clay, or pounded pottery, otherwise it could never have stood the wash of the rain, or the effect of freezing snows. At Tiryns the floor was of this concrete, and was pitched to drain off the water, which ran to a catch-basin covered with a perforated stone on the south side of the court, and reached the outside of the rampart through a walled drain.¹ The walls of ancient cities of Etruria are pierced by many just such drains. The draining of the outer court could easily be managed by pitching the water directly to an opening in the outer curtain.

The outer court conformed to the shape of the hill-top, which, of course, gave the direction of the ramparts on its brow. The inner court, no doubt, did so in many cases, but from its very position it was apt to be further withdrawn from the main walls, and thus freer to follow the more convenient rectangular disposition. This is

¹ Dörpfeld in *Tiryns*, p. 208.

only partly the case at Tiryns. As a rule, around three sides of the court—part of the fourth side, that toward the entrance, was taken up by the inner porch of the Propylaeum — were open porticoes, the *aithousai*, (*αἰθουσαι*) of the poems. On the side opposite the entrance the guest who entered the court beheld the porch or vestibule of the Megaron, the great hall, the principal building of the palace.

At one side of the entrance, so that it did not interfere with the passage to and fro between the gate and the hall, stood the altar of Zeus Herkeios (*Βωμὸς Διὸς ἑρκείου*¹), Zeus of the Court, which we know existed in the court of Odysseus. At Tiryns this took the form of a sacrificial pit. Under the *aithousai* opened the doors and windows which gave light and access to the chambers of the higher retainers or of the sons of the family. It was probably here that Telemachus found his chamber, and its situation in this place, on the same

¹ Joseph, p. 23.

level as the Megaron, would justify the poet's statement that it was in a "lofty place."

The porticoes, too, which were in themselves a decoration as well as a shelter, were carried on carved and painted columns of wood. That this was the case at Tiryns was proved by the stone bases of those columns, which were found in place, though the columns had disappeared. This use of stone bases, while a very old contrivance, for it occurs at Kahun 1500 before Christ, is also a very modern one, as all architects know, and occurs, furthermore, in the ruins of at least one Roman villa in England. The entablatures which spanned the spaces between these columns were also of wood painted or sheathed in alabaster picked out with blue. The principal decoration, of course, was lavished upon the vestibule of the Megaron. Next in splendor would come the vestibule of the Propylæum, or prothuron, and then the aithousai.

Fancy yourself, then, on the charmed pavement of the court of much enduring Odysseus. Above you is the blue Greek sky, cut off in front by the mass of the Megaron, with its red tiles, or reddish clay roof, its sparkling frieze, its painted columns and its walls of stone or of colored stucco. On either side the same red tile roof cuts a sharp line across the blue; and frieze, and column, and painted wall, the latter in a lovely purple shadow, succeed each other as the eye comes down again to seek the more sober coloring of the floor. In such a court as this was the daytime gathering-place of the retainers; here the sports went forward, here, as in the Mediæval castle, the young men were taught the use of their weapons. Here we find the shameless wooers assembling to watch the rough play and the wrestling and to feast on the substance of the absent lord of Ithaca.

VII.—THE MEGARON.

Μέγαρον.

*Megaron andron, Domos, Doma, The
Grand Hall.*Μέγαρον ἀνδρῶν, Οἶκος, Δόμος, Δῶμα,
Δώματα.

What the hall was to the castle or to the manor of the Middle Age, the Megaron was to the Mycenæan palace. In fact it was the "great room," the principal apartment of any dwelling, of the tent of Achilles, of the abode of the swineherd Eumaios. It was descended from a very ancient type which we see in prehistoric Troy, and which we meet again in a modified form in the Atrium of the Etrusco-Roman house. One analogy in the square keep type of the Norman castle fails us, though it is carried out more nearly in the shell keep type and in the French examples. In no instance that we know, un-

less, perhaps, at Arne, is the Megaron fortified. The hall of the square keep stronghold of the Normans was in the Donjon or Keep itself, the last refuge of the garrison, isolated from the other defences and buildings, defending them, as well as defended by them. The French castles have a hall beside the keep. Here we have a palace in a fortified enclosure as in the shell keep type of Norman castle, where the hall and its dependencies are surrounded by an inner wall. Only at Arne do we find anything like defensive precautions after we pass the entrance of the palace. The outer barriers, with the position of the whole, were held to be enough. In making the walls so ponderous as to excite our wonder, so strong as to defy any effort of besiegers or any artillery of that time, they satisfied themselves. In these mighty walls they confided, and the long sieges whereof the traditions have come down, and the stratagems necessary to take holds which could not be reduced, show that the confidence was not misplaced.

The Megaron, as we have already said, faced the inner court on the side opposite the entrance. At Tiryns it looks toward the south, as it no doubt did in all cases where it was possible, and it is not probable that a site where it had to face the north would be selected. A similar arrangement lingered into classic times, for Vitruvius says that there were no porticoes on the north of a Greek courtyard.

In plan the Megaron was a long rectangle which Homer divides into three parts, the aithousa domatos (αἴθουσα δώματος), the prodomos (πρόδομος, πρόθυρον δώματος), and the megaron proper. In this division the ruins in general agree almost exactly, the remains at Troy—both prehistoric and Mycenæan—alone dissenting. In these megara there is but one vestibule. The Women's Megaron at Tiryns is smaller than the men's, and, as having a courtyard of its own, has in like manner a single portico.

The Aithousa.—Αἶθουσα.

The outermost of these rooms, which exists in all the examples, was open to the court, and consisted merely of a portico in antis with two columns. This arrangement, the prototype of the temple porch, gave the architect then, as in later times, ample opportunity for decoration. Its construction was quite simple and determined the ornament. The ends of the two side walls which, by their projection, formed the sides of the vestibule, were sometimes, like the whole wall of the Megaron, of mud brick. In that case they were covered and protected from being knocked to pieces by upright strips of wood which rested on stone sockets, and which, in the ruins, have left the imprint of their size and shape in the material of the wall. At Troy, which probably represented the earlier part of the great period in the architecture of the Mycenæan civilization, the walls are of finely worked stone, and thus needed no

wooden protection, nor do they have, as in the later temples, the antæ of stone, recalling the primitive wooden strips, which acted something like our wooden corner-beads in plaster work.

As the span between the antæ was considerable for single beams, the two columns were set between them to support the wooden architrave, for wooden it must have been, as no stone beams could easily have spanned the intervals. This is made more certain by the fact that the columns appear in most cases to have been of wood, with stone bases to keep the feet of them from rotting by contact with the damp ground. I say in most cases, for in Troy there were found in the space between the antæ neither columns nor stone bases, and that in a very wide space. Here the columns may have been of stone, as the rest of the building was, for while no one would care for a stone base, a column could be used again in another place, and hence—to judge from experience in later

times—the column would vanish, while a simple base might remain. These column bases stand on a step, upon the top step where there are two, which raises the floor of the Megaron above that of the court. Upon them stood the columns of wood, the shape whereof we can only conjecture. The analogy of the Lions' Gate and of the Tholos of Atreus at Mycenæ, would make us restore the shafts as tapering downward and crowned with flat, proto-doric capitals.¹ These columns, however, which show strong Hittite influence, are not of necessity the only ones which prevailed in all Mycenæan architecture. It needs no stretch of imagination to restore, at least in the humbler dwellings, the simple cylinder, the square, or even the tapered column as we are accustomed to think of it. It is difficult to believe that in sober construction—for the columns in the Lions' Gate and the Tomb of Atreus are mere decorations—the early

¹ For a column with reversed taper in Egypt see Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, I, pl. 81.

Greeks would have used a form which, except in votive stelæ, a use akin to that in the tomb, was so foreign to the architecture the later Ionians developed. The free column, when it appears, will very likely astound the antiquaries by reproducing either the form seen at Beni-Hassan, Deir el Bahari, and old Karnac, or of some lotus cap, a proto-Ionic shaft and capital with the upward diminution.

The floor of the aithousa domatos was of different materials, according to the wealth of the lord of the palace and the position of his home. The floor of the whole Megaron of Odysseus was of beaten clay, and so was, no doubt, that of the porch.

At Tiryns the floor is of a concrete of lime and pebbles—the lime perhaps contained some clay. At Mycenæ it is paved with stone. This floor at Tiryns was marked off into squares of red, separated by narrow strips of blue, which in their turn are set off from the red by incised

lines. The dourudoke (δουροδόκη), the "spear-rest" was in the aithousa of the Megaron.

The Prodomos. Πρόδομος.

Between the aithousa and the Megaron proper there probably was, in the smaller palaces, only a door of two leaves with its polished threshold, the xestos lithos (ξεστὸς λίθος), which Homer seems never to weary of praising. This arrangement is to be seen at Troy. In the palace of Amyntor,¹ however, Homer speaks also of a prodomos, or vestibule, as distinct from the portico, and this plan we find sustained, as we have already said, by the excavations at Mycenæ and Tiryns. The oldest houses at Troy are of the simple type. In describing the Megaron of Odysseus the poet mentions only a prodomos, and seems to use the word as interchangeable with aithousa, and thus as meaning the portico.

¹ Il. IX, 472.

At Tiryns three double doors with wooden stathmoi (σταθμοί) or jambs, give access to the prodomos from the aithousa. From the prodomos to the Megaron proper, opens a single large door like that which, in the humbler castles, formed the passage between aithousa and Megaron. Here it is closed by a curtain. The floor in both men's and women's Megaron at Tiryns was of concrete; at Mycenæ it was of concrete with a border of wide stones. Perhaps, in the smaller castles, it was simply of beaten clay, like that of the Megaron of Odysseus.

The Great Hall or Megaron Proper.
Μέγαρον.

We are now within the Megaron proper, the great hall of the palace, the principal apartment of the whole group. It is a good sized room, longer than it is wide, and probably quite high. Its floor, at least in the palace of Odysseus, is of

beaten clay. Its walls, like those of the whole palace inside the fortifications, were sometimes of stone, as at Mycenæan Troy and at Arne, sometimes, as in prehistoric Troy and in parts of the walls at Tiryns, of a sort of half-timber work, a combination of mud-brick and wooden beams, in which the beams run, not vertically, as in Mediæval work, but horizontally. The whole wall then had a footing of stone, which, at Tiryns, was carried to a considerable height. Inside and out, these walls were stuccoed and painted, a practice in which we have the origin of the polychromy of later Greek architecture.

On the inside the walls were sometimes lined, wholly or in part, with plates or rosettes of bronze, and adorned with friezes of alabaster decorated with blue. Such was the decoration in the palace of Alcinous. This splendor was probably less common than the stucco painted in bands which we find in the ruins, and which was probably carried into all the

important rooms of the palace. Hangings, both to close openings and to adorn walls, were no doubt in common use. It is curious that we find here a feeling in regard to the house so different from that of the later Greeks. Until long after the Persian wars, the house, in Greece proper, was little adorned. The Athenian citizen spent his time in trade, in the Agora or upon the hill of Mars. To him the house was only a place for eating and sleeping. Until after the Periclean age, indeed, probably, up to the time of Alexander, he saw adornment lavished only upon public buildings. The Achaian prince saw cause to live in his house. He left it often, indeed, for hunting and for war, but, unless armed and surrounded by his retainers, he could tarry nowhere else. He was fond of his dwelling, and he made it express his power, wealth and taste so successfully that we look upon the remains of it with wonder. While we find Pericles, then, living in a modest house and direct-

ing a state expenditure of millions upon the Propylæa, and upon the temple of Athene, Agamemnon spends untold treasure upon the adornment of his palace and of his tomb, and we can not find a temple in his dominions.

In the center of the great room stood the eschare (ἑσχάρα) or hearth. Arête, queen of Alcinous, sat between it and the column.¹ It may have been of clay, like the floor above which it was raised a step or even two steps, as at Mycenæ. Here, it is circular, eleven feet in diameter, of clay covered with five coats of stucco, each painted as if each had been put on as the one below it wore out. In the women's Megaron at Tiryns the hearth is square.

The heating of the room, then, is plain. The lighting of it, however, is only to be conjectured, though it is generally conceded that the daylight found entrance through the roof, or just under the roof.

¹ *Od.* VI, 305-7.

Homer, as we have said, speaks of columns in the Megaron of Alcinous,¹ and four exist—or rather the bases which carried them exist—in the Megaron at Tiryns and at Mycenæ. In the halls of oldest date, at Troy, none were found, not even the bases, though the span was greater than at either of the other buildings. The absence of them is difficult to account for except on the supposition that the bases of stone have been stolen, or that the columns were of stone, and that columns and bases alike were long ago pressed into the service of some later temple, or even of a peasant's hut. Of course, in all the smaller halls, there was no need of columns, as the heavy *mesodmai* (μεσόδμῃ), or girders, would span the whole width of the room.

In either case, whether the beams did so span the room alone or were aided by columns, there was, almost certainly, in the roof, an opening which differed from the

¹ Ibid.

Mediaeval "louvre" only in detail. It rose above the main roof, carried either upon the four posts and occupying the whole span between them, or upon girders where there were no posts, and taking up a corresponding amount of room in the roof. Its office was to let the smoke from the hearth out, as well as to let the light in, and it must, therefore, have been so large that the former function should not too much obscure the latter. To keep out a driving storm it probably had, if not louvre-boards, at least a shelter of some sort, which could be closed on the windward side. It is almost certain, also, that the walls of the Megaron rose above the surrounding roofs, and had windows near the cornices.¹

The beams of which we have spoken

¹ Joseph, plate I. allows for this rising of the walls, but gives no windows. According to his view the light came in through the spaces between the roof beams over the girders on the columns, and in the same way over the tops of the side walls. See Prof. Middleton's restoration of the Megaron of Tiryns, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. VII.

carried the roof. Homer calls them mesodmai. What kind of a roof they sustained is still a matter of conjecture among the authorities. Schliemann, Joseph, Dörpfeld, Perrot, claim that on the mesodmai lay smaller beams, dokoi (δοκοί), which carried, on boards or reeds, a heavy flat roof of clay, such as they point to in the Troad, in Asia Minor, and in the Cyclades to-day. Tsountas and Manatt agree to this in the case of the palace, but contend for the gable roof in the private house. The argument from the fragments of clay with marks of twigs in it may possibly be unanswerable, but even then the clay may have been laid at an angle as well as on a level. The absence of tiles proves nothing. They were useful, and would be taken from those old buildings exactly as they were taken from later ones. Present practice, indeed, is generally a safe guide to the customs of antiquity in the East, but it is not always so, and, while the existence of the clay roof can be proved

from the debris which filled the ruins at Tiryns, yet, in the face of the late Greek love of the gable, and the Lykian and old Italian analogies, it is not so easy to give up the more picturesque sloping roof. Beaten clay would stand a slight slope in itself—in fact would need one to throw off the water—and if it were covered with concrete it would endure considerably more. The men who concreted the great aule at Tiryns and expected the concrete to stand rain, for they pitched it toward one corner and provided a drain for it, could have protected their roofs.

The floor of the hall at Tiryns was covered with concrete instead of the beaten clay with which Odysseus was content—unless perhaps by the words he used Homer meant a floor of this same kind—and upon the concrete a crossed line pattern, incised and painted, appears again. At Mycenæ the concrete occupies the center of the room, and a strip of flagging three feet wide runs around next to the walls.

Homer called the Megaron "shadowy." No doubt it was. The constant smoke of the fire as it rose through the roof would darken the woodwork, as it has done in old English halls, and in some of our own colonial rooms, and would have an effect even on the side walls. But the hall was not dark. It would very likely seem gloomy to us, who are accustomed to an almost out-door light in our houses, but the old Achaian did not find it so. He did not read there, and he cared little to sit there and look out of the windows on a rainy day. When not compelled to be abroad in the storm he was satisfied, if the season were summer, with the shelter of the aithousai around the court. In winter the feast in the Megaron and the rough horse-play — probably not very different from that of our Saxon ancestors, except in refinement, and we should hardly call the suitors refined — filled out the day. Very likely some farm work took up the attention of the small lords, for Homeric times

were singularly democratic in those matters. Weaving and even sewing could have been done in the hall, for eyes used to a dim light such as the Mediæval silk-weavers had at Lyons, will do work which is a marvel to us, who think our rooms must be flooded with day, and who can not read or draw in a half light.

VIII.—THE WOMEN'S APARTMENTS.

Γυναικωνίτις.

Weaving, sewing, and embroidery, however, did not need to be done in the Megaron, for there was in the typical Homeric palace a regular suite of apartments or a single room set aside for the lady of the castle and her maids. In the small strongholds this was probably a room at the back of the Megaron, from which it was accessible by a door in the axis of the hall and opposite to the main entrance. In the more lordly castles the women had more important abodes, and in Tiryns we find

them endowed with an Aule and a Megaron of their own, corresponding closely to those of the men. The aithousai or porticoes are on two sides only of the aule, and one of these is partly taken up by the aithousa of the women's Megaron, which lies before the large room of the hall, and which, because of its short span, has no columns between the antæ at its sides.

At Tiryns the women's Megaron repeats the internal arrangement of the men's hall. It has its portico or aithousa, its hearth, its cement floor, and no doubt its louvre in the roof whence the smoke of the fire found escape into the air.

The cooking for the men seems, from the poems, to have been done in their hall. No doubt the women's Megaron in the same way served as their kitchen as well as their parlor and living-room.

The castle of Odysseus—though in its Megaron three hundred suitors could feast and riot—seems to have been one of the humbler class, as regards the arrangement

of the Gunaikonitis or women's rooms. The women's apartments were behind the men's Megaron; and, though there is nothing in the *Odyssey* which denies the existence of a special court for the women in the rear, like the Peristyle in the classic Roman house, it seems fair to assume that there was only one room at the end of the men's hall, from which a stair led to Penelope's chamber, in the second story. The thalamos (θάλαμος) or chamber of Odysseus, was probably beyond this room, and may have opened out of it, as the tablinum out of the Roman atrium. For the women's apartments at Tiryns and Mycenæ are but the enlargement of the thalamos, which formed one of the three parts—court, vestibule, and inner room, (thalamos)¹ of which the house of Paris consisted on the acropolis of Troy. This thalamos and the Roman tablinum, the chamber at the end of the Roman covered

¹ II. VI. 316, οἷ οἱ ἐποίησαν θάλαμον καὶ δῶμα καὶ ἀδλῆν.

atrium, were no doubt kindred descendants of a primitive Aryan form, which had another representative in the chamber opening out of the north European hall.

IX.—THE BATH-ROOM.

Eurycleia's discovery of the identity of the old beggar whom Telemachus has received would hardly have emboldened the critics to claim the existence of a separate bath-room in the palace of Ithaca. There no doubt was one, as everyone is willing to admit, since Schliemann and Dörpfeld have unearthed that in the Tirynthian castle.

The bath-room at Tiryns is west of the men's Megaron, from the prodomos or vestibule of which it is approached, while it is also accessible from the western aithousa of the court. It is a small, almost square room, about 8'-8" by 10'-1", its floor formed of a single slab of limestone through which a hole was drilled for the escape of the water when the terra cotta bath tub—

fragments of which were found—was emptied upon it. This hole carried the water into a terra cotta drain. This free use of terra cotta shows that though no roof tiles were found at Tiryns, the men of that time could have made them, and, indeed, may have had such roofing material, which, in a later age, less skilled in tile-making, may have become the booty of ambitious house builders. The drain ran under the palace, and no doubt carried away the water from the two large court-yards, and emptied its contents upon the scarped rock of the citadel outside the mighty rampart wall. Such drain openings are, as we have already noted, common in all the city walls of Etruria

X.—THE SECOND STORY.

Hyperoon. Ὑπερφών.

That this was not uncommon in Homer's time may be gathered directly from the poems. Penelope's chamber on the second

floor, where she wove and ravelled the web of her destiny, was perhaps only an instance of what was the rule. We have been too prone to imagine that the houses of antiquity were of one story. The many-storied tenements of Rome, the three-storied dwellings of Egypt, and the stairs which exist at Tiryns—probably two separate flights¹—and at Mycenæ should dispel all such lingering popular errors. At the same time Homer's silence as to any room beside this chamber on the second floor gives us a great deal of latitude. It may be that the roofs, as Dörpfeld claims, were flat, and that these upper rooms were like smaller houses set upon them. It is possible, indeed probable, that, since the Megaron was very high, as became its great length and width, the two stories of the rest of the palace brought the other roofs level with its roof. Again, the analogy of a funerary urn in Etruria, which

Dörpfeld, in Schliemann's *Tiryns*, p. 248-9.

indicates a balcony on the second floor, and that of the drawings in Egypt, which show something very much the same, may give us a clue to some similar arrangement in the palace of the well greaved Achaians. Later excavations will perhaps do something to settle the question of the elevation of the Homeric palace. Till then all will be more or less reasonable conjectural restoration.

XI.—THE PASSAGE AND THE POSTERN.

Laure. Λαύρη. *Orsothure.* Ὀρσοθύρη.

Besides the main rooms, the names of which occur so repeatedly in Homer that their use is clear, several apartments meet us in the palace at Ithaca, which, even in the added light shed upon the subject by the Tirynthian excavations, it is hopelessly difficult to identify. At the side of the Megaron was a laure, or passage, which led, or at least gave some access to the treasury, and to the armory, and which

figures very prominently in the dramatic slaughter of the Suitors. This has, of course, its analogue in the passage just east of the great hall at Tiryns, but the plan at that palace furnishes no clue to the exact arrangement at Ithaca. Nor is there any reason why it should, whether Homer was describing the actual abode of Odysseus, or was drawing an imaginary picture. The Château de Coucy and Caerphilly castle have in common, the moat, the curtain wall, and the court-yard of the Mediæval castle; but, if one of our authors of to-day described either of them, the antiquary who, centuries hence, with the text of that author's description of one of them in his hand, scrutinized the ruins of the other, would be puzzled or exasperated by the disposition of the walls and rooms. Sir Walter Scott's description of the Manor of Woodstock, or his account of Front-de-bœuf's castle, while they might be explained by the ruins of any building of their respective periods, could not be exactly restored from those ruins. Any attempt,

then, to define the place of the postern, the orsothure, high up in the wall, through which the treacherous servant escaped from the Megaron to bring arms to the Suitors, is as useless as it is to fix the exact position of the armory from which he took the weapons and armor which he bore to the doomed wretches huddled at the end of the hall. The reader who wishes to hear the case discussed will find the arguments in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* for 1886.

XII.—ARMORY, TREASURY, THOLOS.

Thalamos hoplon. Θάλαμος ὅπλων. *Treasure.* Θησαυρός. *Tholos.* Θόλος.

As we have just said the precise location of the armory, from any thing Homer says, is out of the question. It seems to have been reached by a passage—the laure guarded by Eumaios—though we are not told that the laure traversed the whole distance thereto, and it also appears to

have been somewhere at the end of the group of buildings which formed the palace. Very likely both armory and treasury were near or beyond the thalamos of Odysseus.

That the tholos, or round building, was not the treasure chamber is certain from its peculiar position, and from the fact that near it, on a beam running from it to the wall of the court, Odysseus hanged the treacherous maid-servants, after he had slain the Suitors. Dr. Joseph's conjecture that it was the privy, is no doubt the true one.¹

XIII.—THE APPEARANCE OF THE PALACE.

Let us now put together the details we have been studying, and try to form a clear picture of the Homeric stronghold as a whole. The best method of doing this will be to place ourselves about a thousand feet in the air, and at some distance

¹ Joseph, p. 24-27.

Figure X. FOUR STAGES IN
PALACE BUILDING.



from the acropolis and the palace we wish to survey. The drawings, figures X and XI, show what we shall see from such an aerial standpoint. In X we are looking north, but in XI northeast, and thus, in the latter case, diagonally across the long axis of the castle.

At the top of the limestone hill, in figure X, where the grey stone crops out through the greensward which appears above the trees around the base of the eminence, we see the footings of the mighty, roughly jointed wall, its broad surfaces, and its crown of parapet and battlement.

At our right we see the approach, a long slope keeping close to the escarpment of the cliff, which is crowned by the rampart wall, or *herkos*. Where this slope enters the castle it makes a short turn, and goes through the wall by means of a gate flanked by two large towers. Beyond this outer gate, which was purely and simply for defence, we see the lower or outer court with surrounding stables, storehouses, ser-

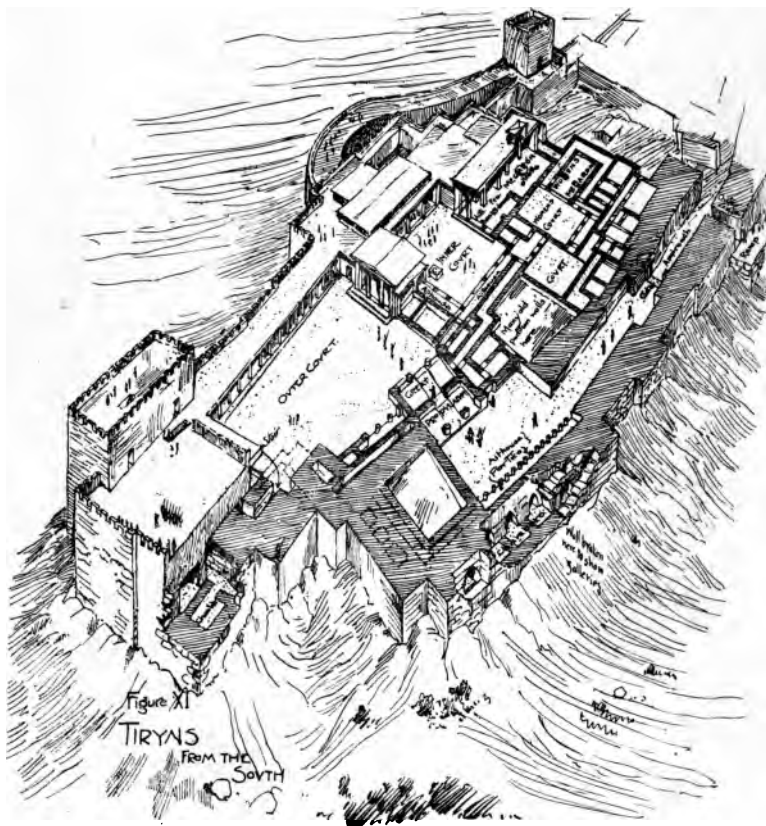
vants' quarters, etc., and the stately propylaeum which leads to the upper or inner court, the aule.

Within the circuit of the inner wall, which is pierced by this propylaeum, we descry this court of honor, with the Megaron in front of us and the shady, echoing aithousai at the sides.

Beyond the Megaron are the roofs of the women's rooms, of the thalamoi, the treasury, the armory, and of whatever other apartments there may have been.

Beyond these might lie the garden, such a garden as Homer has described for the palace of Alcinous: "Without the court (aule), near the doors, was a great garden, four acres in extent, and round it on every side was driven a fence (herkos). And in it grew tall flourishing trees, pear, and pomegranate and apple trees with gleaming fruit, and sweet fig and flourishing olive trees."¹

¹ *Od.* VII, 112. See Blomfield, *The Formal Garden in England*, p. 229.



As we lift our eyes from the palace there opens before us the valley in which it lies, or the island which it wholly or partly dominates. Forests rise on the hills to the right and to the left, interspersed with tilled ground, and with pastures for sheep and goats, with waving corn, and with greensward browsed upon by black cattle. The huts, or the more pretentious dwellings of the lesser folk, crowd around the base of the acropolis.

On the other hills gleam the walls of other castles, each with its little ring of tilled ground and smaller houses, while between the strongholds we find stone-paved roads. Beyond the hills rise the mountains, blue and distant. Behind us is the haven with its swift ships, never many, seldom stationary, and its traffic which again other paved ways bring to the castles and to their towns which the fear of pirates, the ever present pests of the uneasy sea-trade of the time, has kept back from the beach. There, too, is the

sea, the wine-colored sea, thalatta, the beloved of every Greek of old or of the classic time, the sea which, if it would, could tell us all we long so eagerly to know of Crete, Mycenæ, Ithaca, and Ilios, but whose voice, alas, is only the unending beat of its waves upon those ancient shores.

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